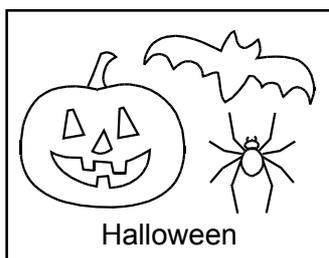
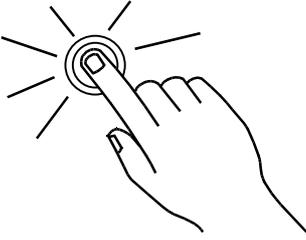
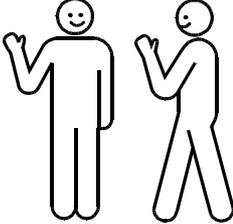
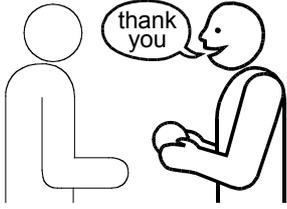
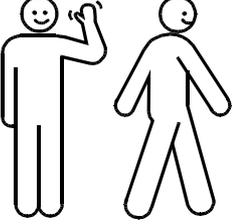
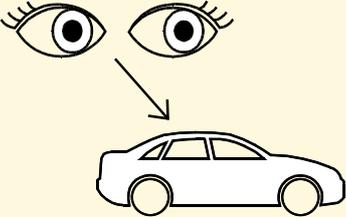




Halloween is for many children a long awaited celebration of candy and fantasy. For children on the autism spectrum however it can be overwhelming and potentially a bit risky. **Here are some ways to prepare for Halloween in the week ahead:**

-  Start talking about halloween a few days before, a gradual build up is better than sudden immersion. Talk about the fun and dressing up and sweets. Help them get their head around their outfit - if there are sensory challenges you could paint something on an old favourite t-shirt, perhaps they could wear a cap that is decorated and could be removed if they needed?
-  Does your child **not** wish to go trick or treating? Could they stay in and help you pass out treats to others? Now is a good time to start working on some things they might say eg. "Would you like some candy?" or "You look great!"
-  Does your child want to go trick or treating? You can find a great social story here:  
<http://www.ccsd.edu/files/filesystem/Going%20Trick%20or%20Treating.pdf> Work through it over the next few days and familiarise them with what will happen.
-  Do you have an exit strategy? If you are going out with more than one child you may wish to organise another adult to accompany you, this way if your ASD child is overwhelmed and needs time out - or home time - then you are more flexible.
-  Are there dietary restrictions? If you can persuade a few neighbours to substitute their sweets with your own treats then great, otherwise allow your child to collect sweets with the understanding that you will trade them at the end for a treat/toy/food that they want.
-  Use the attached prompt cards for what to do when out trick or treating - make sure you practice beforehand!
-  Talk about the rules for safety when out, including staying with the group, not running ahead, and holding hands when crossing a road. Stress that the consequence for non-compliance will be stopping the fun. Once again the prompt cards supplied will help your communication when your child is distracted by all the excitement.
-  Think about a way to make sure you can be easily spotted/easily spot your child as groups pass each other, since it will be dark and all those costumes can be confusing.
-  Use the visual icon below on your child's schedule/planner to help them anticipate the timing correctly.
-  If your child is unable to say the words "Trick or Treat" allow them to use this communication sign instead.



 ring doorbell	 trick or treat!
 Hello	 thank you
 Goodbye	 walk together
 please wait	 check for cars



**Trick or treat!**

Please bear with me,  
my speech is still a  
work in progress.